

CERTIFICATION HELPS MANUFACTURER RETAIN CUSTOMERS,  
EXPAND INTO NEW MARKETS

**ABOUT CERAMCO INC.** Ceramco manufactures custom technical ceramics of complex geometries for customer-specific applications. Danish immigrant and MIT scholar Dr. Anders Henriksen founded the company in 1982, and his son assumed leadership responsibilities of the business in 2006. Today, Ceramco employs around 20 people at its headquarters in Center Conway, New Hampshire. The company serves numerous markets, including aviation and aerospace, scientific instrumentation, energy, textiles, and heat treating products. It also produces a full line of stock ceramic fasteners for general use in applications that demand the properties only offered by a ceramic.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Ceramics is an emerging technology, and Ceramco made considerable capital investments in R&D to realize the potential of a larger market that could use their unique processes and products. Several of these new customers wanted Ceramco to be ISO 9001 certified. As General Manager Jim McMahon explained, "We were concerned with losing customers who stated (ISO) was a requirement." Company leaders knew they had to obtain ISO certification to grow their customer base and increase market share.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Ceramco took advantage of the ISO 9001:2008 Collaborative Program offered by NH MEP, a NIST MEP affiliate. NH MEP designed the project with its partner, Exolytics, to train small and medium-sized enterprises on ISO 9001 at an affordable cost. McMahon was impressed by the step-by-step approach of the training, as well as the camaraderie among participating companies. "We shared information and that interaction was important," he said. Next, Exolytics visited the company and worked directly with Ceramco employees on the manufacturing floor. McMahon offers advice to companies in a similar position: "Get your corrective action plan in soon. Engage the employees."

Ceramco obtained ISO certification less than eight months after starting the Collaborative Program, and now takes a more systemic approach to handling day-to-day issues. The company has a structured resolution plan for when something goes wrong and employees are comfortable applying methodical corrective actions according to the ISO documentation. Ceramco retained two major customers and increased productivity. Now that quality assurance is standardized and simplified, the company is looking forward to innovating the technology more aggressively and entering new markets.

"I appreciated the fact that the [NH MEP] ISO training was a streamlined approach without making it too complex. With the help of the training and ISO certification we strengthened our position of retention with two of our major customers."

-Jim McMahon, General Manager of Ceramco, Inc.

## RESULTS



Retained two major customers, totaling **\$100,000** in business



Achieved **18%** growth rate

## CONTACT US



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